



WINTER, 2005

Message from the President

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Wow! It's only February, and I barely remember 2004. This year has gotten off to a running start. Some of us in the TBR system are gearing up to convert to a new computer system. Many of our private colleagues are already using the new system, and I'm sure you'll be hearing cries for help. (I've personally already put one in...) Isn't it great that we have an organization like TACRAO that creates a bridge between all types of Tennessee's higher education institutions? This new project for TBR just highlights the strength that comes from diversity. In a profession where we depend on clear cut rules (we wish) and struggle to maintain consistency from term to term, it's good to reflect on what can grow when we embrace change.

Your TACRAO Board of Directors is off and running this year as well. Look for another Summer Admissions Workshop that includes both new and seasoned admissions counselors. Planning for the Registrar's Roundtable and regional Support Staff Workshops is under way as well. Also look to hear from someone in your region in early of April concerning this year's TACRAO service project.

Memphis is already a memory, and Nashville is just a few months away. For those of you who were unable to join us in singing the Piggy Bank Blues, take a look inside to see what happened. For those of you who were there, look inside to remind yourself of what we learned. The TACRAO Annual Meeting is always about growth, professional development and change. It's also about key lime pie, chocolate fondue, The Cowboy Astronomer, meeting new friends, and renewing bonds with old ones.

The TACRAO Board of Directors and the Time & Site Committee is not just looking at this November. We are finalizing a site for the 2006 annual meeting and looking beyond. Planning for 2007 and 2008 is already under way. As we look to our next meeting in the middle (no pun intended), Nashville is becoming less and less of a viable financial option for our organization. The Board has been approached about bringing Chattanooga into the mix as a possible site for a Middle Tennessee meeting. Recognizing that this may have far-reaching budget implications either way, voting members should be receiving something in the next few weeks with additional details outlining the Time & Site Committees recommendation. If you have immediate questions, please feel free to call or email me.

Take care in the New Year. I'm sure I'll see you somewhere soon.

Tim

Photos of TACRAO 2004

Do you want to remember how insightful and fun the TACRAO 2004 Annual Meeting and Conference was? Then visit the TACRAO website at www.tnacrao.org to see photos from the 3-day event. Download times may vary, but you'll see a small version of each photo on the main page. Simply click on each photo to see a larger version.

If you have any digital photos from the conference that you would like to submit, email them to news@tnacrao.org.

Random Facts:

- ◇ Our eyes are always the same size from birth, but our nose and ears never stop growing.
- ◇ You burn more calories sleeping than you do watching T.V.
- ◇ You would have to count to one thousand to use the letter "A" in the English language to spell a whole number.

My Experience at TACRAO 2004

TACRAO wrapped up 2004 with its annual meeting, entitled “The Piggy Bank Blues,” which was held in Memphis this past November.

The meeting opened on Wednesday with a motivating and unique keynote address. Ms. Carrie Griffin addressed the different styles of leadership through the dynamics of dance. The first night ended with the annual “Big Event,” which was a viewing of the IMAX movie, *Dolphins* and a trip to the planetarium.

After browsing exhibitors’ tables and attending riveting information sessions the next day, attendees were treated to a decadent dessert reception Thursday night, featuring lots of chocolate!

The annual meeting wrapped up on Friday with admissions/records forums and everyone’s favorite...door prizes.

As a first-time attendee, I was not sure what TACRAO was all about or what the annual meeting entailed. I was impressed with the variety of topics presented at the information sessions. There was something for everyone whether the attendee was an admissions recruiter or records analyst. I was able to attend four sessions on four distinct topics. Session topics ranged from employee relations to student communication/marketing to office procedures. Although all were topics that I use as an admissions counselor, none of the information overlapped.

Make plans to attend the 2005 TACRAO Annual Meeting being held in Nashville. Not only are the annual meetings a learning tool, they are a fun-filled opportunity to meet others in the admissions and records field.

Carol Laney
Admissions Counselor
The University of Memphis

And the 2003 Winners are....

Certificates for the “2003 TACRAO Conference Best Session Awards” were awarded during the Business Luncheon at this year’s Annual Meeting in November.

The session winners included:

“Financial Aid 101” - John Norrell, Assistant Director of Financial Aid, MTSU

“Swimming in Chaos—Clean Sweep Strategies that Stick” - Lisa Norris, President, The Transitions Group, Cookeville, TN

“Fishing for Dollars” - Kyle Jackson, Assistant Registrar, ETSU

The winners from this year’s conference will be recognized at the 2005 Annual Meeting and Conference in Nashville, TN

“I was impressed with the variety of topics presented at the information sessions.”

-Carol Laney



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 : *TACRAO 2004 Conference Session Reviews* :

Session 1.1 Travel Tips and Etiquette

Presenters: Heather Mattson, Admissions Advisor, Volunteer State Community College
 Eric Farmer, Admissions Counselor, Tennessee Technological University
 Wes Gentry, Admissions Counselor, The University of Memphis
 Recorder: Rodney Robbins, Assistant Director of Admissions, Middle Tennessee State University

This session was well attended by both new and old professionals alike. The presenters gave valuable information to those of us who are road warriors. Some of the information shared covered ways to be more professional while dealing with staff, peers and superiors and how that could be applied to our interaction with school counselors, students and parents. Also of interest was proper etiquette in professional situations. Those new to the profession will also appreciate the "Flavor of Tennessee", a list of popular local restaurants across the state. Things you can do to stay safe and stay fit while on the road were also discussed.

Session 1.2 Electronic Communication with Students, Faculty, and Parents or How to Tell Everyone You Ever Wanted Them to Know and More Without Paying Postage

Presenter: Noel Schwartz, Registrar, The University of Memphis
 Recorder: Linda Puckett, Associate Director of Admissions, Middle Tennessee State University

Steps to develop this new communication plan began with a sample term calendar as a guideline for when to send electronic messages. The plan also encompassed what questions are most frequently asked by students, faculty, and parents. When using electronic correspondence, Noel warned about clearly and concisely wording the email title and message text so that the message does not generate extra telephone calls and emails to the office.

University of Memphis students are now assigned an email account when they are accepted for admission. They are told at orientation that this account is the official means of communication between them and the university.

Correspondence via email as opposed to snail mail has proven very cost effective and has allowed students to receive important university information in a more timely and efficient manner. For example, since the implementation of the electronic communication, the number of students who have registered early has increased and the number of students who are purged for non-payment has decreased.

Session 1.3 Sleeping on the Job

Presenter: Tojuana K. Jordan, Assistant Director of Admissions, Middle Tennessee State University
 Recorder: Beth Ann Swallows, Admissions Counselor, Tennessee Technological University

"I am NOT a sleepyhead" was the vow we took as Tojuana Jordan of MTSU began her animated session entitled, "Sleeping on the Job."

In her "It's time for bedtime," sheep-covered pajamas and fuzzy animal slippers, she emphasized the fact that Americans, as a whole, are sleep deprived. Did you know that six to eight hours after waking, your body needs rest again? How many of us give our body that luxury?

Jordan went on to say that sleep deprivation affects our weight, appearance and overall health. What many people don't realize is how it also affects our work performance. We must ask ourselves, "Am I mentally drained? How does that affect my work? and What can I do about it?"

Statistics show that naps improve work performance and that rested employees perform better. Jordan has taken those studies to heart, which is why everyday in her office, she closes the door, flips off the lights, pulls out her red and blue kindergarten mat, and rests for 20 minutes. She suggests everyone take time out for themselves each day—not to sleep necessarily, but just to rest. If we commit to practice that ritual each day, we can give ourselves the energy we need to be our best on the job.

(continued on page 3)

(continued from page 2) Session 1.3 Sleeping on the Job

****Four Most Common Excuses when Caught Sleeping on the Job****

- 4) They told me at the Blood Bank this might happen.
- 3) I must have left the top off the White-Out. You probably got here just in time!
- 2) I was just resting my eyes.
- 1) In Jesus' name, Amen.

Session 1.4 Lottery Rules for 2005 Grads

Presenter: Courtney Dillard, Marketing Specialist, Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation

Recorder: Jerri Winningham, Transfer Coordinator, Tennessee Technological University

Courtney Dillard, Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship (TELS) Marketing Representative, covered the TELS application process, the TELS Eligibility Basics, the Tennessee General Assembly May 2004 approved changes, transfer student GPA, communication with TELS recipients, refunds, full-term and part-time status, appeals and exceptions, retention of TELS, military service before college and military mobilization.

Packets were distributed that included the power point presentation, the Lottery Scholarship Staff contact information, a list of contiguous states to Tennessee and counties, e*Grands flowchart and the House Bill No. 2134. Web site addresses were provided for Tennessee Student Assistant Corporation www.state.tn.us/tsac/ and Tennessee Scholar Dollar www.tnscholardollars.org/. The changes approved by the General Assembly have been incorporated into the Tennessee Scholar Dollar web site.

Session 2.1 Campus Visitation: Kick It Up a Notch!

Presenter: Robert L. Hodum, Assistant Director of Admissions, Tennessee Technological University

Recorder: Rosalynne Martin, Admissions Counselor/Recruiter, Southwest Tennessee Community College

Chef Bobby Hodum concocts a tasty recipe for campus visitation during his session at the annual TACRAO conference in Memphis, TN. Dressed in gourmet chef attire the presentation was a 4 star rating. Chef Hodum provided the audience with fresh pastries created by TTU's Dining Services, and this started this session with a bang. Bobby provided practical tips to enhance the traditional college visitation program. His step-by-step recipe included information on how to make the visitation run smoothly from the initial contact with the student to the follow-up correspondence after the visit. He included suggestions on how to offer a variety of ways to scheduling the visits to informative information about what to send in the confirmation packet. He also emphasized the importance of having campus wide support of the event, in order to have a great program. This session provided the audience with an opportunity to reevaluate how they conducted their college visitation days. In addition, it provided insightful tips to help admissions officers gear our programs to make the campus visit more "personal" with the prospective student and their parents and to kick it up a notch!

Mr. Hodum provided a resourceful PowerPoint presentation. If you are interested in receiving a copy, please email Bobby at rhodum@tntech.edu.

Session 2.2 FERPA? Let's Talk

Presenter: Kyle Jackson, Assistant Registrar, East Tennessee State University

Recorder: Brenda Rector, Registrar, Roane State Community College

This session began with a brief overview of FERPA basics including the Buckley Amendment, definitions of some basic terms, directory information and annual notification. The presenter then reviewed who has rights under FERPA as well as what rights are given under FERPA. He discussed what constitutes an educational record and pointed out several exceptions to educational records. The student's right to review their educational records, the guidelines for requesting an amendment to those records and the student's rights to have some control over disclosure was reviewed.

Finally the session wrapped up with some recent revisions to FERPA. The included the use of electronic signatures, disclosure of disciplinary records, alcohol and drug disciplinary records, registered sex offenders and the Patriot Act.

Session 2.3 Student Information Analysis and Reports using MS Access and Excel

Presenter: David P. Dwiggins, Systems Support, The University of Memphis
Chair/Recorder: Stacy Tramel, Associate Registrar, Milligan College

This session provided an opportunity to see two commonly used software packages in action. Many of us have Microsoft Access and Excel at our fingertips, but quite often we do not tap their full potential. The presenter discussed database design (including tables, queries, and reports); the advantages of using a relational database for data storage and retrieval; the basics of developing a focus program; and the ways that Microsoft Access and Excel can be used to create helpful reports, charts, and graphs from data imported from our student information systems. Several online examples effectively demonstrated these principles and encouraged us to consider ways that we could better use Microsoft Access and Excel in our own offices.

Session 2.4 Tennessee Lottery Q&A

Presenter: Courtney Dillard, Marketing Specialist, Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation
Recorder: Carol Laney, Admissions Counselor, The University of Memphis

Tennessee colleges are realizing the impact the lottery has on Tennessee students. In the ever-changing world of the Tennessee lottery, college officers and students have tons of questions. Ms. Courtney Dillard, marketing representative for TELS Program/marketing specialist for TSAC, addressed many of the questions that TACRAO members asked during the Lottery Q & A session at the 2004 TACRAO Conference.

During the Q & A session, questions focused on the communication of lottery information to students and proposed changes. Ms. Dillard stressed that communication is vital for lottery recipients to be successful and maintain their scholarship. TSAC is primarily depending on high school counselors to provide lottery information to prospective students. TSAC is also asking colleges to assist in the communication by alerting students of deadlines and procedures during new student orientation as well as placing lottery information in financial aid, advising and registration centers.

Ms. Dillard closed the Q & A by reminding members that "Scholar Dollars," "Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship" and "Hope Scholarship" are different names often used for Tennessee's lottery scholarship program.

Session 3.1 Meet the Parents

Presenter: Michael Alston, Employee Relations Specialist, University of Tennessee Health Science Center
Recorder: William Winstead Assistant Director of Admissions, The University of Memphis

Alston began by sparking discussion from a *Washington Post* quote discussing the over involvement of parents in the college selection process. His famous Admissions Funnel demonstrated parents are just like an applicant. Recruiters and universities must win them over in order to succeed at enrolling their sons or daughters. Michael made some references to the over involved parents and discussed a majority are from better social and economic areas. He also posed the question and asked what TACRAO institutions are doing with parents. From web sites to parent associations, many things are being developed to win over numerous parents. A humorous part of the presentation was the comparison of TV families and what would be the obstacles recruiters would encounter with Tim Taylor, June Cleaver, Dr Frazier Crane and The Bundy's. Michael also issued a challenge to TACRAO to have a parent college or a parent TACRAO information session in the future.

Session 3.2 TN Lottery Scholarship and Student Persistence

Presenter: Matt Stiegemeyer, Communication Coordinator, The University of Memphis
Recorder: Ashley Daniel, Prospect System Coordinator, The University of Memphis

This presentation was part of an initial literature review for Matt's dissertation in the Department of Education. The topic centered around the impact of Financial Aid on student persistence from year to year.

As the first Tennessee Lottery Scholarships were awarded in the Fall of 2004, Matt is interested in the impact this new type of financial aid will have on persistence at Tennessee universities. He also made some comparisons with the Georgia Lottery Scholarship program, which served as the model for Tennessee.

Session 3.3 How to Make the Work Place a Kinder, Gentler Place

Presenter: Susie Archer, Assistant to the Provost, Vanderbilt University

Recorder: Linda Orth, Director of Records and Registration, The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Susie Archer packed the house with staffers in search of ways to make the work environment kinder and gentler. Drawing inspiration from Robert Fulgum's book *All I Ever Needed to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*, Susie captivated her audience with anecdotes and tips to combat negativity in the work environment. Each of us owns a responsibility to make the work environment a more pleasant place and drawing on some basic principles we all learned in kindergarten, Susie showed us how to apply those very same principles to our grown up world of work and challenged us create a more pleasant work environment in our own institutions. Her enthusiasm captured everyone's attention.

Session 3.4 Update on Optional ACT Writing Assessment Offered February 2005

Presenter: Tinsley Furry, Associate Consultant, ACT

Recorder: Sharon Blair Bumpass, Admissions Counselor, The University of Memphis

Tinsley Furry, Associate Consultant for ACT in the East Region presented this workshop. According to Ms. Furry, the Optional ACT Writing Assessment will begin in February of 2005, for freshman entering college in 2006. It is important to realize that nothing has changed as far as how the ACT is being administered, this is just a different way to test a student's writing skills. By the way, ACT has always tested writing skills, before they were tested with multiple choice questions, now the student will provide an actual writing sample which will be read and graded by two independent readers. The writing assessment is optional because many colleges and universities already have existing measures in place for incoming freshmen.

ACT found from their surveys that one-third of colleges/universities already have a writing test, one-third colleges/universities are satisfied with the information that they already receive from ACT and one-third are interested in the writing assessment. Only 17% of colleges/universities are requiring the writing assessment, 20% are recommending it, 63% are not requiring a writing assessment and neither is the NCAA.

The grading of the ACT will not change, once the writing assessment has been graded and scored, it will be part of the English score. The student is given a writing test prompt and asked to take a position and to use specific reasons and examples to support their position. The student is given 30 minutes to respond to the prompt along with four blank pages on which to write their response. Accommodations and fee waivers are still available for students that need and or require them. The writing assessment is also available for the ACT Residual. The writing assessment is scored by two separate readers, the scores are added together, and become part of the English score, the writing score does not have any affect on the composite score. Each subject area will still be graded in the (1-36) score range.

Since ACT had to make room on the score reports, the one visible change that you might see is the elimination of the subscores, those will still be available you will just have to go to the ACT website for them. There are resources available for educators on the ACT website <http://www.act.org/aap/writing/postsec/download.html>. While you're on that website, if one of your students has taken the optional writing assessment, you will be able to see the comments that the readers made about the student's essay. The important thing to remember is that nothing has changed with ACT.

Session 4.1 NCAA Compliance: Do you know the rules? (cancelled)

Session 4.2 Getting down to Banner Basics: An Overview of the Big Picture and a Brief Demonstration of how the Key Modules Work

Presenter: Brandy Cartmell, Director of Academic Records & Registrar, University of Tennessee at Martin

Recorder: Tonia Cox, Senior Secretary, University of Tennessee at Martin

In this non-technical session, Cartmell gave an overview of Banner's integration and a brief demonstration of several key modules. Some of the areas that were demonstrated included the following processes: admissions, general student, catalog, term setup, class section setup, student registration, grade, degree, transcript, and CAPP. Many questions were answered concerning the daily use of business operations in Banner.

Session 4.3 How to Discipline Employees

Presenter: Michael Alston, Employee Relations Specialist, University of Tennessee Health Science Center
Recorder: J.Christopher Fleming, Assistant Director of Admissions, Middle Tennessee State University

This session examined the documenting of employee performance and conduct. The presenter spoke from the perspective of an employee relation specialist. In doing so he provided insight into the appropriate way to document malapropos employee performance and conduct. Utilizing the focus of an employee relation specialist the speaker delineated definitions for common performance and conduct problems. Various personal experiences and hypothetical scenarios were shared to clarify the possible performance and behavioral problems encountered in the workplace. These examples provided demonstrations of correct and incorrect ways of how managers and employees handled the alleged situations.

The session not only focused on the manager's process of documenting or in many cases their lack thereof, but also the recourse of the accused employee. The presenter spoke on formal and informal disciplinary actions and explained the importance of manger and employee documentation being clear, objective, and complete.

Session 4.4 How Much Do You Know about Tennessee Students?

Presenter: Tinsley Furry, Associate Consultant, ACT
Recorder: Connie Budai, Admissions Advisor, Volunteer State Community College

This was an interesting, interactive session where participants were "quizzed" to determine how well they knew the ACT trends for the 2004 Tennessee high school graduating class. We discussed demographic trends about high school students and helpful data ACT has available for us.

Do you know what high school classes are being referenced when the "ACT Core" or more is mentioned? Students who took the core or more tested as much as 2 points better on the ACT than those who did not take the core. Did you know that eight TN students received a perfect 36 score on the ACT and two of those students attended White Station High School in Memphis? Did you know that 78% of students indicate they will need to work while in college?

Tinsley also pointed out resources available (through ACT) that will help us stay abreast of this information. The ACT User Handbook contains helpful information on the Tennessee "norms" (p.12). The Freshman Class Profile Report (for the current year) is available free of charge from ACT. "Standards for Transition" is a booklet with information particularly helpful to faculty in translating ACT scores into equivalent skill levels.

Session 6.1 Registrar's Forum

Moderator: Kyle Jackson, Assistant Registrar, East Tennessee State University
Recorder: Janice Choate, Assistant Registrar, Lipscomb University

The TACRAO registrar's forum met to consider hot topics of interest in the world of registrars. Topics included proposed changes in IPEDS reporting, orientation programs and transcript evaluation for transfer students, credit limit for dual enrollment transfer work and calculation of the transfer GPA for the TELS requirement.

Session 6.2 Undergraduate Admissions Forum

Moderator: Mona Snell, Middle TN Regional Representative, The University of Memphis
Recorder: Holly Trotter-Vincent, Enrollment Management Coordinator

Mona Snell hosted the forum on Friday of the TACRAO conference. She opened by introducing Holly Trotter-Vincent who would be filling her position for the next two years on the TACRAO Board. She then, addressed some concerns that high school counselors had brought to her attention throughout the year regarding admissions counselors' professionalism. Mona stated that she had received several complaints about counselors being rude to students at college fairs, not replying to invitations and complaining on evaluations when there are not enough tables for their schools. Mona reminded all of the attendees that it is very important to have a good reputation with the guidance counselors at the high schools and to RSVP to each fair they plan to attend.

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(continued from page 7) Session 6.2 Undergraduate Admissions Forum

She also stated that admissions counselors' attitudes could be a reflection upon their institutions and how keeping a positive attitude is a must. Mona told all of the guidance counselors to direct their comments to the Directors of Admissions for each college who they feel acted inappropriately. Vanessa Gordon, Vice President for Publications and Information Technology, mentioned that any schools who have new employees should encourage them to sign up for the TACRAO list serve to receive up to date information on TACRAO as well as the TACRAO calendar. Mona stated that they should also encourage them to read the TACRAO Articles of Good Practice and Ethical Standards. Holly Trotter-Vincent reminded the group that she would appreciate help with the calendar committee for next year and if anyone is interested in signing up, to please do so. After several comments were made by the group regarding college fairs, the TACRAO calendar, etc, Mona closed the session by thanking everyone for their participation and reminding them to fill out the Undergraduate Admissions forum session evaluation as well as the conference evaluation.

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• *Thank you to all of the session presenters, moderators and recorders for your time* •
• *and effort to make the TACRAO 2004 Annual Meeting and Conference a huge* •
• *success!* •
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2004-2005 TACRAO Board Members

- **President:** Tim Amyx, Director of Admissions, Volunteer State Community College
- **President-Elect:** William Winstead, Recruitment Coordinator, The University of Memphis
- **Past-President:** Vanessa Dowdy, Associate Director of Recruitment/International Students , Southwest TN Community College
- **Secretary/Treasurer:** Amy Deaton, Assistant Director of Admissions, Austin Peay State University
- **Vice President for Admissions & Financial Aid:** Brandon Ponder, Admissions Counselor, University of Tennessee, Chattanooga
- **Vice President for Data Management & Research:** Brenda Rector, Registrar, Roane State Community College
- **Vice President for Recruitment Services:** Holly Trotter-Vincent, Enrollment Management Coordinator, Cleveland State Community College
- **Vice President for Records and Registration:** Janice Choate, Assistant Registrar, Lipscomb University
- **Vice President for Information Technology and Publications:** Vanessa Gordon, Admissions Counselor, Tennessee Technological University

Help Make 2005 Great! Be a Volunteer!

Interested in being more involved with TACRAO this year? Start the year off right by volunteering to serve on a TACRAO Committee. The "I Will Volunteer" sheet is now on the website (under the "Documents" section). Simply fill it out and return to Tim Amyx. Committees include Admissions Summer Workshop, Graduate School Forum, Registrar's Roundtable, Support Staff Workshop, and the infamous Statewide Coordinating (Calendar).

Holly Vincent (Calendar committee chairperson) would especially appreciate any volunteers to help organize the Fall 2005 college fair schedule. Contact her at hvincent@clevelandstatecc.edu to volunteer for the Calendar committee, or fill out a Volunteer form.

Tennessee Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers

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What is TACRAO? (from the Members Guide)

The organization is a non-profit, professional association whose purpose shall be to provide for the exchange of ideas and information and about higher education in the State of Tennessee and the nation as a whole, to promote the advancement of higher education, to support and promote the professional development of and the friendly spirit of cooperation and unity among its members, and to act as a coordinating agency among the member institutions.

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|-----------|----------|
| Boots | Sleet |
| Wind | Jacket |
| Frost | Toboggan |
| Freeze | Cold |
| Scarf | Sleigh |
| Snowflake | Ice |
| Snowman | Mittens |
| Blizzard | Earmuffs |
| Gloves | Icicle |
| Sweater | Slippery |
| Parka | Sled |
| Fireplace | Snow |
| Snowplow | |



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 for Winter**

